


IHSA 81-25

5 October 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Members of Strategic Planning Working  
Group on Information Handling Facilities

FROM:

  
Chairman

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SUBJECT: Discussion Issues and Working Group  
Expectations

ATTACHMENTS: a. Paper titled "Overview of Information  
Handling Facilities Concern"  
b. Paper titled "Terminals"  
c. Paper titled "Data Bases"  
d. Paper titled "Data Transmission,  
Dissemination and Distribution"

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In preparation for the Working Group Meetings on Strategic Planning for Information Handling Facilities, the IHSA Staff has written four papers; one an overview and the other three on topical areas (see attachments). These papers are intended to provide information on current status, focus the issues, and present key questions--with the expectation that the answers will aid in setting planning goals and objectives. The papers are being made available to Working Group Members one week in advance of the first meeting to help in preparing.

In following sections a summary of the overview paper is provided, and for each of the topical areas, the planning issues and expectations of the Working Group in responding to the issues are presented.

First, however, it should be clear that the Working Group need not be constrained to those issues to follow; indeed, participants are encouraged to present other issues they believe to be pertinent to the planning process for Information Handling Facilities.

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## 2.0 SUMMARY OF OVERVIEW PAPER

Growth rates in message traffic, VM service, and disk storage are presented, with an explanation that the growth has been absorbed by technology advances. The paper establishes the linkage between numbers of terminals and the need for Data Processing and Communications Facilities, and suggests that planning activities clearly define this linkage.

While pointing out that technology has absorbed much of the growth in Information Handling Facilities notes of caution for the future are expressed.

Office Automation Services are singled out for the potential of having a profound impact on Information Handling Facilities during the planning period. The paper points out that payoff assessment will be increasingly important as the Agency invests in Office Automation.

## 3.0 TERMINALS

### The Issues

During the eighties the Agency will be challenged by the need to provide a terminal for most management, professional, and clerical employees. The investment for just the terminals could exceed  if we are to fully meet this need; this presents a question of affordability. Accordingly, we must understand better who is to have terminals, when, and what type.

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### Working Group Expectations

- o To provide estimates of numbers of terminals, by type, to be installed each year during the planning period (through 1989).
- o Define characteristics of terminals in regard to:
  - o Data Processing
  - o Local Storage and Retrieval
  - o Graphics
  - o Electronic Mail
  - o Local Network Support

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- o Develop planning assumptions for distributed versus centralized functionality.
- o Review current and planned programs to determine deficiencies in satisfying Agency needs through the eighties.

#### 4.0 DATA BASE FACILITIES

##### The Issues

During the eighties we will be challenged by:

- o Increasing quantities, sizes, and types of data bases.
- o Increasing numbers of users.
- o The need to make data bases more widely accessible.
- o The need to provide easy to use tools (Query Languages, statistical analysis, modeling, graphics, etc.) to allow effective utilization of large quantities of data.

##### Working Group Expectations

- o Establish growth estimates for quantities and sizes of data bases through the planning period (1989). Characterize types of data bases. Estimate the number of users for each type of data base.
- o Describe Data Base related tools that will be needed for effective utilization.
- o Provide estimates for needs to access community data bases.
- o Express strategic, or qualitative, arguments which should be factored into the planning process.
- o Review current and planned programs to determine deficiencies in satisfying Agency needs through the eighties.

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## 5.0 DATA TRANSMISSION, DISSEMINATION AND DISTRIBUTION

The Issues

During the eighties the Agency will be challenged with providing the necessary communications and dissemination facilities to carry and disseminate increasing volumes of information to the right people in a timely manner. Trends, which will have an impact, include:

- o New overseas facilities and procedures, such as CRAFT.
- o Dispersion of more terminals in the Washington area and the need for connectivity (terminal to terminal, terminal to multiple computer systems).
- o More information, particularly open source information, will be distributed in electronic form.
- o New Office Automation functions such as electronic mail, teleconferencing, and shared electronic files place demands on local communications capabilities.

There are several large programs either in development, or in the planning stage, which provide increased facilities for carrying and disseminating information. There must be an assessment of the adequacy of these programs to take us through the eighties.

Working Group Expectations

- o Characterize and provide estimates for new operating procedures and new services which drive requirements for distribution and dissemination facilities.
- o Express strategic, or qualitative, arguments which should be factored into the planning process.
- o Review current and planned programs to determine deficiencies in satisfying Agency needs through the eighties.

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